

Strolling Strings

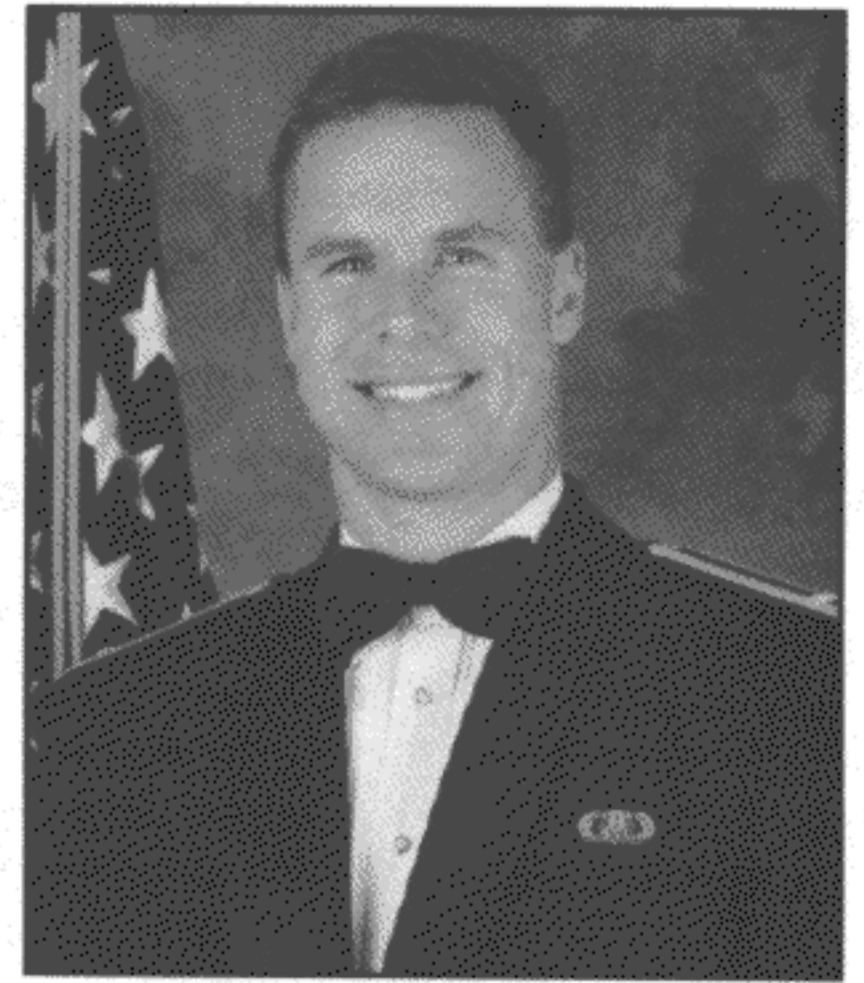
We hope everyone had a happy and safe holiday. Now it is time to begin implementing our plans for the new year. The members of The United States Air Force Strings are pleased to welcome First Lieutenant Keith H. Bland to our distinguished group! After two years with the United States Air Force Heartland of America Band at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska, Lt. Bland won the selection as the director of The Strings at Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C. Lt. Bland's performance and experience make him an excellent choice. He was met with a wave of praise and enthusiastic approval and we hope that he will enjoy his new home in the Washington area.

Lt. Bland first appeared as the conductor of The String Orchestra in November during an eight-day tour of Wisconsin and Minnesota. The Strings performed in the cities of Milwaukee, Platteville and LaCrosse in Wisconsin, and in Winona, Minn. At the end of the tour, The Strings presented clinics and demonstrations at The Midwest Strolling Strings Festival in Minneapolis. We were warmly received and enjoyed bringing our music to the enthusiastic audiences in this part of the country.

For this past holiday season, The Strings participated in the recording of a compact disc and performed in the holiday concerts in Baltimore, Richmond, Va. and Washington, D.C. in addition to other December performances. TSgt Jessica Dan served as soloist, interpreting with musical professionalism the violin solo in Antonio Vivaldi's *Winter* from "The Four Seasons." Originally from Beijing, China, TSgt Dan studied at Central Conservatory and joined The Strings in May 1997. Local audiences have enjoyed her performances for several years since her studies brought her to the United States. The holiday program also included a klezmer-like rendition of "The Eight Days of Hanukkah." For this entertaining piece, CMSgt William Popp, SMSgt Karl Heikkinen and MSgt Jane Bockenek joined several members from The Concert Band and Singing Sergeants. MSgt Dustin Saam, TSgt William Tortolano, MSgt Paul Swantek and TSgt Vivian Podgany performed the lovely string quartet "Among the Leaves So Green" which was arranged by CMSgt Michael Davis.

In upcoming performances, The String Orchestra will forward to being in Midlothian, Va., on January 23, and then traveling to Patrick Air Force Base in Cocoa Beach, Fla. at the end of the month. The group will also be lending its support for the 1999 Guest Artist Series.

—TSgt Erin Eyles



First Lieutenant Keith H. Bland

THE 1999 COLONEL GEORGE S. HOWARD YOUNG ARTIST COMPETITION

The United States Air Force Band is pleased to announce five finalists in the 1999 Colonel George S. Howard Young Artist Competition. They are clarinetist Mark J. Dubac, grade 11 from Columbia, Md.; trumpeter Sean Maness, grade 11 from Angleton, Texas; euphoniumist Joshua Daniel Orchard, grade 12 from Walkersville, Md.; euphoniumist Glenn Wilkinson, grade 12 from Burlington, N.C.; and tubist Grant Harville, grade 12 from Verona, Wis.

Tapes were received from across the country. The judging committees for this round were made up of members

from The Concert Band. Performers on every instrument entered in the competition. The finals will be held Saturday, January 9, 1999 at 1:00 p.m. in The USAF Band studio. The winner will perform with The Band on Sunday, March 21, 1999 at 3:00 p.m. in DAR Constitution Hall as a part of the Guest Artist Series.

The competition is named for the second conductor of The United States Air Force Band to honor his contribution to young musicians and to the United States Air Force. Begun in 1994, it is open to band instrumentalists in

grades 10 - 12. Applicants must submit a videotape of themselves performing a required piece. Alto saxophonist Timothy Michael Dearmin, 12th-grader from Marshall High School in San Antonio, Texas was the 1998 winner and he also performed with The Band at the Texas Bandmasters Association concert in July 1998. Repertoire and dates for the competition are announced each April. Information about this competition appears on The Air Force Band Home Page and in many national music publications. Complete information may also be obtained by telephoning MSgt Lucille J. Snell at (202) 404-8363.

—MSgt Lucille J. Snell

The Concert Band

Happy New Year to friends of The Air Force Band! After a busy holiday season with performances up and down the East Coast, we return to the recording studio at George Mason University as we prepare to put together two compact discs for 1999. In February, we begin our annual Guest Artist Series with concerts each Sunday at 3 p.m. at Constitution Hall. These are free and open to the public with no tickets required. We will play a major role in each concert, backing up our celebrity guests as well as presenting major works from the wind band repertoire. On Tuesday, February 2 at 7:30 p.m., we will be presenting a Groundhog Day concert at Urbana High School in Urbana, Md. Another concert of local

interest will take place on Friday February 19 at 8 p.m. at Charles County Community College in La Plata, Md. We hope to see as many of you Marylanders as possible at these two performances.

We bid a fond farewell to percussionist TSgt Thomas Maloy. We would like to thank Tom for his four years of dedicated service and wish him the best of luck upon his separation from the Air Force. A heartfelt welcome goes out to the newest member of The Concert Band, French hornist, TSgt Kathleen Monroe.

—MSgt Jeffrey Gaylord